

for measures, gentlemen, and not men, and for this simple reason, that for four years we have had men and not measures, and I am wearied of them.' It was said, however, that they ought not to accept any measures from the hands of those who had opposed the Reform Bill. But he shows at length how little claim the Whigs themselves can lay to consistency even in the matter of reform, and how little right they have to call other men renegades and apostates : and then, in a famous and daring passage, he expounds his doctrine of consistency.

The truth is, gentlemen, a statesman is the creature of his age, the child of circumstances, the creation of his times. A statesman is essentially a practical character; and when he is called upon to take office, he is not to inquire what his opinions might or might not have been upon this or that subject; he is only to ascertain the needful and the beneficial, and the most feasible measures are to be carried on. The fact is, the conduct and the opinions of public men at different periods of their career must not be too curiously contrasted in a free and aspiring country. The people have their passions, and it is even the duty of public men occasionally to adopt sentiments with which, they do not sympathise, because the people must have leaders. Then the opinions and prejudices of the Crown must necessarily influence a rising statesman. I say nothing of the weight which great establishments and corporations, and the necessity of their support and patronage, must also possess with an ambitious politician. All this, however, produces ultimate benefit; all these influences tend to form that eminently practical character for which our countrymen are celebrated. I laugh, therefore, at the objection against a man, that at a former period of his career he advocated a policy different to his present one. All I seek to ascertain is whether his present policy be just, necessary, expedient; whether at the present moment he is prepared to serve the country according to its present necessities.

If on Peel and his Ministry he suspends judgment, to the Whigs he gives no quarter. He has always believed that they intended to make themselves masters for life, and they would certainly have gained their object if they had succeeded in overpowering the House of Lords as they